

EDUCATION:

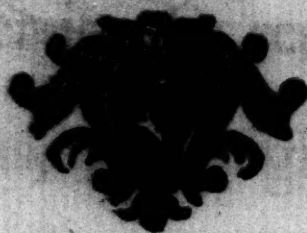
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ESSAY.

By GIBBONS BAGNALL, A.M.

K.



L O N D O N :

Printed for R. BALDWIN, in *Pater-Noster Row*; J. DODSLEY, in *Pall-Mall*; W. OWEN, near
Temple-Bar; and C. PUGH, in *Hereford*.

M. DCC. LXV.

EDUCATION:

ESSAYS

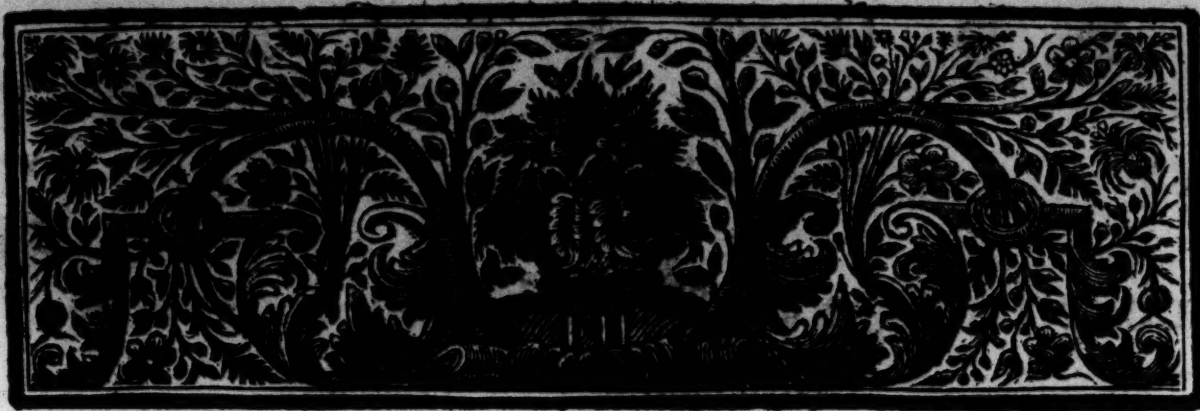
BY GIBBONS BAGNALL, A.M.
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LONDON:

Printed for E. Baldwin, in Pall-Mall; J. Doherty, in Fleet-Street; W. Owen, near
St. Dunstons; and C. Foul, in Hatfield.

M.DCCCXXV.



EDUCATION:

AN ESSAY.



WHAT foil the apple loves, what wise decrees
Establish order in the realm of bees ;
In lofty strains, and high on fancy's wing,
Let Roman *, British † bards, harmonious sing.

* Virgil, Georg. iv.

† Philips's Cyder.

Be our's the task t' improve, and to refine
The nobler fruitage of the soul divine :
Trace genius to its source, and mark the lines
Where folly terminates, and sense begins.
Guide infant-steps secure to virtue's hill,
By ev'ry brink, and precipice of ill ;
Convince the weak, the timid, and the slow :
That 'tis a Godlike attribute to know *.

O PATIENCE, heav'nly maid, that liv'st unseen
In some sequester'd shade, - or bow'r serene ;
The pismire's labours who delighted see,
And form a thousand links to hold a flea † ;

* Prior. † Alluding to a celebrated artist who framed a chain of several hundred links for that laudable purpose.

Affist my flight! No common aid I ask,
To sing the tutor's multifarious task.

WHILE yet the puny boy can scarcely speak,
(Sweet beauteous babe with dimple in its cheek)
Fair Madam Slip-slop ‡, 'tis perhaps decreed,
Shall teach the future scholar how to read.
Perhaps some worn-out matron near at hand,
Whose age, and spectacles respect command.
From these he learns to modulate his tongue,
And ev'ry syllable to utter — wrong.
From these derives that soft melodious close,
With all th' enchanting music of the nose.

‡ A character in Mr. Fielding.

8 E D U C A T I O N.

For best of organs ignorance can spoil,
 As jacks groan hideous when in want of oil.
 In verse, in prose ; alike he tires your ear
 (Ah cruel fate of those condemn'd to hear !)
 Wit, beauty, sentiment, with grief and joy,
 Are all absorb'd in dull monotony.
 Nor stops regards he, which are learn'd with ease ;
 And without rests no harmony can please.

THUS far advanc'd, perhaps some snatt'rer foul
 For pelf admits him to his paltry school :
 Mamma with tears resigns, and sob most serious,
 To odious Latin, Cato and Corderius*.

* Two of the first books which boys are generally put to read.

Behold

Behold him now for eight long tedious years !
 When ripe for Alma Mater he appears.
 No single passage can he justly speak ;
 Yet studies Virgil,—and has heard of Greek.
 Without one spark of taste, or genial fire,
 Which Cam, or Isis, will (we hope) inspire.
 Not so the gen'rous youth, whose cultur'd mind
 Betimes to Attic elegance inclin'd ;
 Like flexile osiers hath been taught to bend,
 And well concerted discipline attend.
 No stranger he to Ciceronian sense,
 Or secret po'wrs of nervous eloquence :
 He sees its force in each harmonious line,
 His bosom glows with sympathy divine.

Thus various stiles his various passions move,
While some with terror fill, and some with love.

WHEN Maro warbles in the beachen shade,
He feels the breeze, and hears the sweet cascade :
When with Bellona join'd he spreads th' alarms,
Arms then's the word, the trumpet * calls to arms.
Catullus smooth the tender sigh can raise,
In melting, soothing, elegiac lays :
Horace all sweetness, elegance, and ease,
In odes can charm, and make ev'n satire please.
Oh blind to nature, and her dearest joys,
Who useless fancy poetry to boys !

* At tuba terribilem sonitum procul ære canero, &c.

Say, who prefers a part before the whole?
 Prose may the body be, but verse the soul:
 For what is prose if delicate and right,
 But measur'd sounds which ev'ry ear delight?
 Though not exactly scan'd, yet numbers still
 Must be preserv'd; or we have soon our fill.
 And who shall metre, quantity define;
 Phoebus once flighted, and the sacred nine?

Of schools which best may merit our regard,
 Publick or private; to decide were hard.
 As inclination leads all mortals go,
 Peculiar benefits from each may flow;
 Yet weigh th' advantages on either hand,
 The former seems our pref'rence to demand:

Far as remote antiquity we trace,
This education holds the foremost place.
In these did prophets cultivate their mind,
Here human learning with divine they join'd:
Egypt *, and Persia † had their public schools;
Here Spartan ‡ heroes learn'd Lycurgus' rules.
The world's a public school and he that can
Frequent it most, becomes the wisest man.

BUT feeds, you'll say, of early vice are sown;
True, but not always; nor in these alone.
Seas have their danger, and the public road:
Go, hide in caves, and haunt the pathless wood.

* Diodorus Sic.

† Xen. Cyropæd.

‡ Pausanias.

No curb can hold the base abandon'd mind :
Who preaches reason to the lawless wind ?
Yet vice still worse by privacy is made,
As noisome weeds grow faster in the shade.
The beauteous blossom which, in open air
To solar beams expos'd, would flourish fair ;
Depriv'd of these will sicken, and will pine :
And hills, not vales, produce the noblest wine.

OF masters next, though qualify'd to teach,
No tongue the vast variety can reach.
Some think that boys should endless vigils keep ;
Some lash (as they their tops) 'till fast asleep.
Ingenuous natures thus recoil at once,
And dawning merit dwindles into dunce.

D

They

They shrink, of four severity afraid :
Stern Busby spoil'd more scholars than he made.
Alas ! we gain not learning in a trice.
Keep rods for wilful wickedness and vice.
'Tis emulation, and desire of fame,
That leads to honour, and secures from blame.

IN antient times, when poetry was young,
Inflam'd by Homer's captivating song,
Her sister eloquence step'd forth to view,
When Grecian games contending heroes drew.
From flow'r to flow'r Herodotus had flown,
Domestic sweets, and foreign were his own :

Assembled nations heard him, and admir'd,
 And great Thucydides * himself was fir'd.
 O! think what charms hath praise for youthful ears,
 Which operates so strong at fourscore years.

Not ev'ry master in our num'rous schools
 Attends enough to orthographic rules :
 Yet what in nature more reflects disgrace
 Than spelling bad, and accent out of place?

SOME almost overlook th' historic page,
 Yet suits that study with our tend'rest age.

* Vid. Stanyan's pref. who tells us, that Thucydides was eighty years of age, when he was so fired with emulation at hearing Herodotus read his history at the Olympic games, that he immediately resolved to write an history himself.

Now fair Mnemosyne * will gently smile
 Amusement now, what ten years hence were toil:
 To make it please should geography unite,
 And clear chronology must give us light:
 By these each stated period we assign,
 When Tully charm'd, when Socrates divine;
 What glorious fields saw Scipio in his bloom;
 What the dominions of immortal Rome.
 Hence, by degrees, to nobler heights we climb,
 The range of science, and of arts sublime.
 How sweet upborne on reason's plume to rove
 Through all th' etherial argent fields above;

* Mnemosyne was mother to the Muses, her name signifies memory.

Through

Through all th' expanse the distant stars survey,
And measure out the planetary way!
Eye nature's walks, and search the vast profound,
See wheeling orbs perform their various round;
Their swiftneſs, gravity, and courſe deſcry
Through the vaſt void of yon cærulean ſky!
Thus narrow ſouls are taught t' extend their view,
And mortals with ſurprize ſee wonders new;
How vaſt the fabric of this world was rear'd,
How vaſt its cauſe, and worthy to be fear'd!

THE mother-tongue ſome totally forego,
And various illſ from that omiſſion flow.
Unworthy offspring of Britannia's land!
Shall her victorious fleet the ſeas command,

Aloft in air her thunderbolts be hurl'd
Through every quarter of th' admiring world;
And shall her dastard sons forbear to tell
How much her beauties too of speech excel?
When Greece triumphant rul'd the azure waves,
All else were deem'd barbarians, fools, and slaves:
And Roman phrase was study'd with delight,
Far as the Roman eagles wing'd their flight.
We too have speakers, that display with ease
The fire of Rome, and elegance of Greece.

As winding through the glade the silver Thames
Collects his tribute from a thousand streams;
While flow'rs their odours on his banks exhale,
Sweet as are wafted on th' Arabian gale;

So,

So, through a course of many circling years,
 Improving still our British tongue appears :
 Enrich'd with ev'ry grace the world can boast,
 Bright as our gems from India's happy coast.

SEE ! Milton kindling into holy rage,
 With idioms borrow'd from the sacred page !
 Hear Philips warbling in sublimest strains,
 Philips, the pride of Ariconian plains !
 Hear Waller, Dryden, Pope, divinely sing,
 Soft as the wood-larks in the new-born spring !
 Oh ! for a muse unbounded in her flight,
 To soar with Shakespear to seraphic height !
 Pierce nature's veil, make prize of all she meets,
 And bask in fancy's paradise of sweets !

NOR

NOR heed we verse alone---what heart but glows,
When Sherlock reasons in exalted prose?
When nervous Swift puts forth his honest rage,
Or polish'd Addison refines the Age?
Smooth is the flow from Atterbury's quill;
Oh! had his heart been faultless as his stile!
Heav'n had beheld him then without a frown,
And rank'd him equal with her Tillotson.
Nor want we patterns now of true sublime,
Spight of the ravage of devouring time;
While Newton, active as in early life,
Maintains for prophecy the glorious strife;
Friend of mankind, reforms what seems amiss,
And leads his flock through flow'ry paths to bliss.
In English then be genius first display'd,
Be wisely here the first foundations laid.

BUT

BUT, O ye sages, who, as friends to truth,
Are guardians plac'd o'er inexperienc'd youth;
Observe their morals! make them early bend
To him from whom all benefits descend!
Enforc'd be ev'ry duty, and explain'd:
Christian, and scholar should go hand in hand.
So shall the rising age deserve applause,
Brave in their king's, and in their country's cause.
So shine with lustre in more active scenes;
So learned Ascham * form'd the best of queens.

IN vain we boast a philosophic mind,
Improv'd by study, and by arts refin'd;

* Ascham Roger, tutor to Queen Elizabeth.

In vain would soar by reason's feeble aid :
 'Tis all but pedantry, and false parade.
 Religion, polar star, must point the way ;
 Erroneous else eternally we stray.
 And, spight of pride, this tribute must be giv'n :
 The gifts of nature are the gifts of heav'n.

F I N I S.



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